



JULY ISSUE

WHO WE ARE

The Asian Art Society features an online catalogue every month listing quality works of Asian art that have been thoroughly vetted by our select members, who are the in-house experts.

By bringing together a group of trusted dealers specializing in Asian art, our platform offers a unique collection of works of art that collectors will not find anywhere else online. To ensure the highest standards, gallery membership is by invitation only and determined by a selection committee of influential gallerists

  /AsianArtSociety

Cover Image: Japanese armour
Presented by Kitsune Gallery
on p. 112

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LUMIÈRE NOIRE

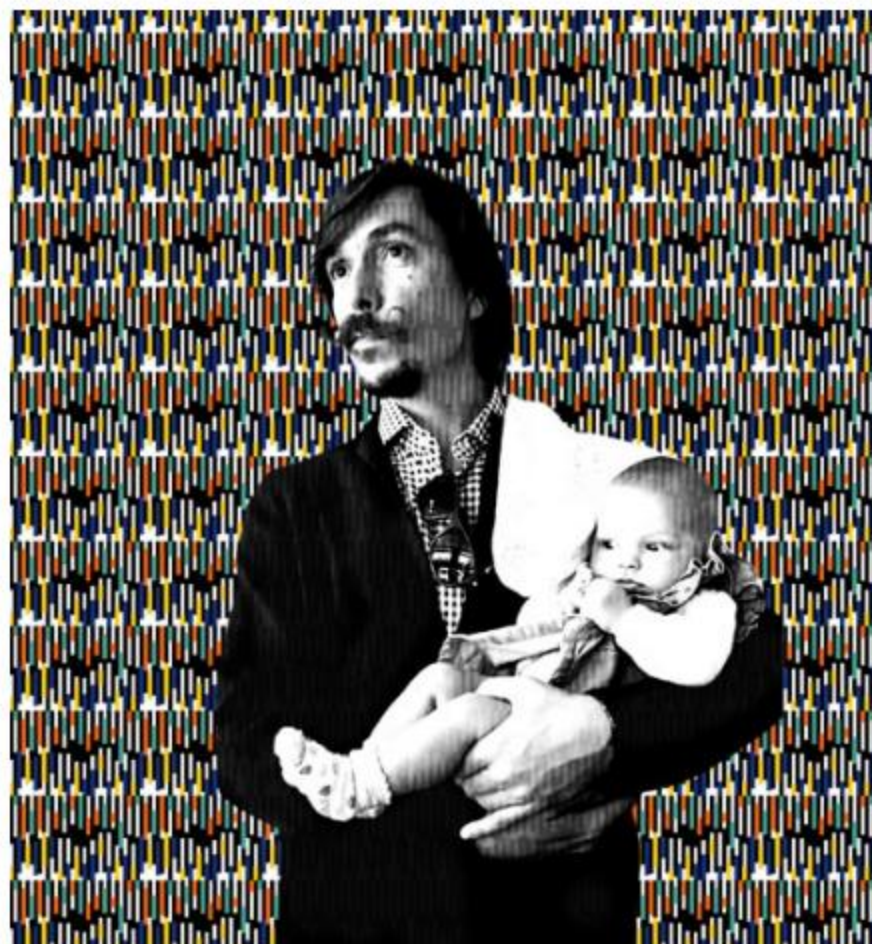
Que diriez-vous d'un tête-à-tête
avec une œuvre d'art...



... dans le noir ?

ALEXIS RENARD

Gabrielle Lesage Art +



ALEXIS RENARD

Alexis Renard has been passionate about Indian and Islamic art for more than 20 years, and is a well-known expert in these fields. His gallery is in the heart of Paris, on Ile St. Louis. Besides selling high quality works of art, Alexis provides advice and expertise to collectors, institutions and auction houses. Many of the objects that have passed through the gallery are now in international institutions. In his 20 years of activity, he has published more than 20 exhibition catalogues, curated exhibitions, and participated in more than 50 prestigious international art fairs.

Currently, the gallery is also developing a "Cultural Content" department devoted to projects such as Sensory visits. Curatorial services for institutions are also being provided, and a program of podcasts is under development. All of these activities have the goals of sharing Alexis Renard's passion for Indian and Islamic art with a wider audience, and creating bridges between historic art and the contemporary world.

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ALEXIS, YOUR GALLERY IS NOW PRODUCING CULTURAL CONTENT. CAN YOU TELL US MORE?

After more than 20 years working in the Islamic and Indian art market, we have developed expertise and our own taste through more than 20 catalogues. We gathered objects of specific themes such as Wunderkammer, Game of Gods / Game of Love (epics in Indian and Persian art), Nature, Ottoman art, Calligraphy, Fierce and Ferocious, Exotic Mirror (depictions of Europeans in South Asian art)...

Our passion for the stories told by objects, and how they can help us learn and understand the world in a better way, led us to develop new projects such as Podcasts, Curatorial services and Sensory Visits.

HAS THE HEALTH CRISIS HELP YOU TO RE-THINK YOUR CONTENT?

The fact that things did slow down with the Covid crisis allowed us to have more time to develop these new projects.

ON THE OCCASION OF YOUR NEW CATALOGUE, YOU ARE INTRODUCING « LUMIÈRE NOIRE ». WHAT IS IT?

Lumière Noire is a Sensory Visit in the dark. Visitors are seated in our 17th century basement in complete darkness, guided by my voice and a story written with Gabrielle Lesage Art +. They are given a small torch, like the ones we had when we were kids, and invited to discover our exhibition like if they were entering a hidden Indian temple.

CAN YOU SHARE WITH US TWO PIECES SHOWCASED IN « LUMIÈRE NOIRE »?

Visitors are first confronted to an impressive image of the fierce form of Shiva, a meter tall granite sculpture of Bhairava, formerly in the Vérité collection. They are taken to many places and stories, such as entering a Mughal painting of a night hunt, with members of the Bhils tribe hunting with fire.

« LUMIÈRE NOIRE » IS AIMED TO ENGAGE THE AUDIENCE BEYOND SIMPLY LOOKING AT IT, RIGHT ? YOU LOSE YOURSELF IN A STORY AND GET "CAUGHT UP" IN ONE.

The aim of this experience is to begin a different relationship with the pieces, and to be involved in a more emotional part of the artwork. The darkness, the guiding voice, the small focused light, are allowing immersion into the pieces, giving them a completely different dimension in this setting. In museums or at art fairs, we never have the opportunity to see paintings and sculptures that way.

THIS CAN BE DONE IN ALMOST ANY MEDIUM OF ART, BUT IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCES ARE MORE COMMON WITH DIGITAL ART. WHAT WAS THE CHALLENGE WITH SCULPTURES AND PAINTINGS?

We had to rethink the installation to allow people to move around the pieces in the dark. We have decided not to use labels, and not get too deep into the usual descriptions of pieces involving dating, materials and

techniques, but rather to focus more on what the object tells us about its culture, and why it has been made.

NO TWO PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCES ARE EXACTLY THE SAME, BUT CAN YOU TELL US HOW YOUR AUDIENCE REACTED TO THIS EXPERIENCE. DOES IT IMPART A MORE PROFOUND MEANING FOR THE PARTICIPANT?

Only one or two people are allowed to do this immersive experience at the same time. Phones are not ringing, viewers are not distracted, and they can develop a relationship with the pieces in a more profound way. We had great feedback from the visitors. With this original experience they told us they had easier access to the meaning of the pieces.

WILL THE PODCAST BE AVAILABLE ON YOUR WEBSITE OR ANY OTHER PLATFORM?

The podcast is not yet available, as we are seeking partners to develop more podcasts. Our first podcast is telling the story of the rediscovery of an album page that had been lost for more than 200 years. It is called "The adventurers of the lost page".

ARE YOU THINKING OF ADOPTING AND INCLUDING MORE TECHNOLOGY, SUCH AS AR FOR EXAMPLE?

We are convinced that we don't need complex technology to really experience art in different ways! Our Sensory visits do not need more than a good story

accompanied with voice, sound and atmosphere.

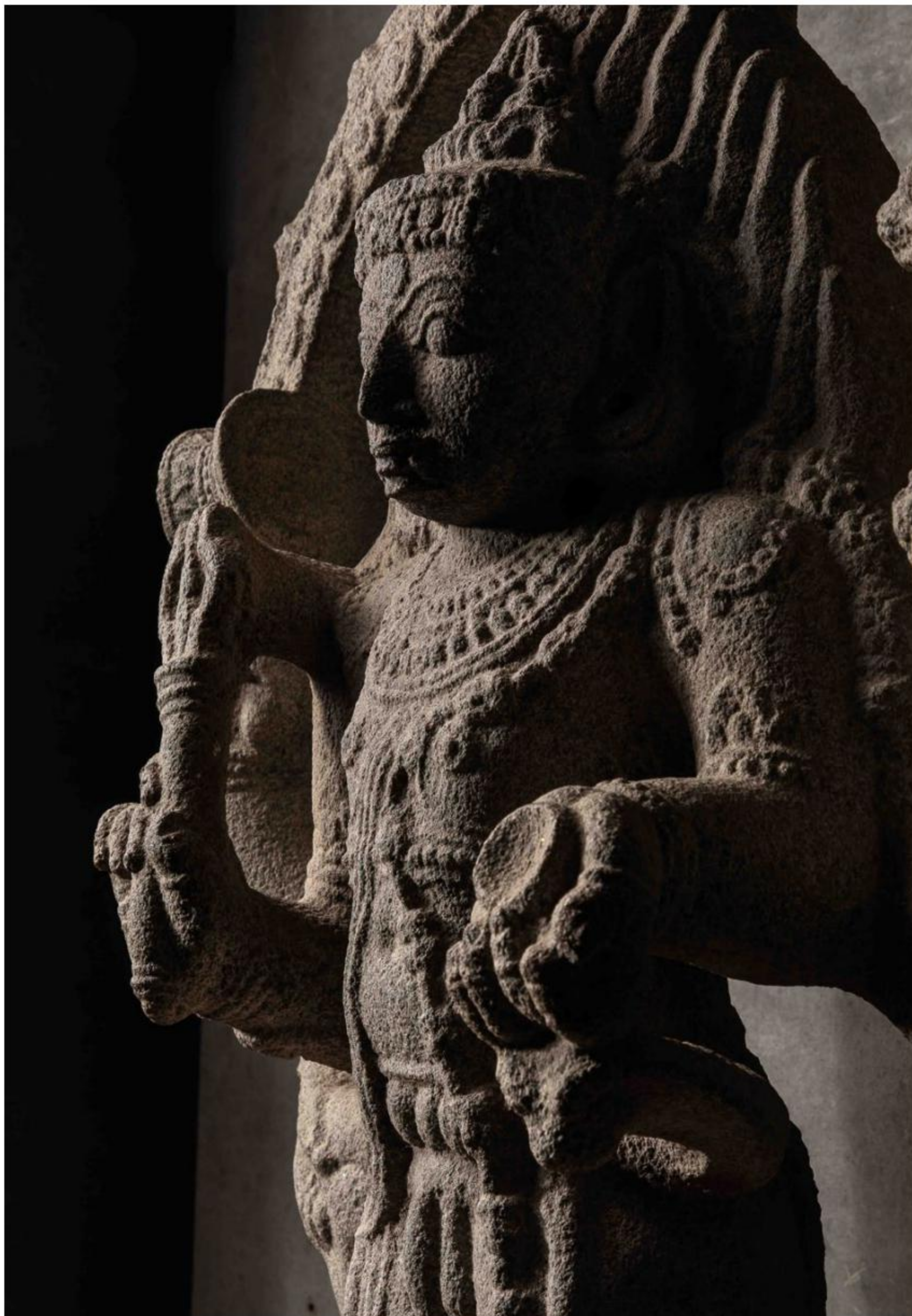
WHAT OTHER PROJECTS ARE YOU WORKING?

We are also working on curatorial projects with innovative themes for institutions. Our experience and expertise in Islamic and Indian art and culture allow us to have a fresh and different vision of what can be told with artworks.

LUMIÈRE NOIRE

10/06 – 22/07 2021

Galerie Alexis Renard
5 rue des deux ponts
75004 Paris





JULY ART WORKS

Pieces are published and changed each month. The objects are presented with a full description and corresponding dealers contact information. Unlike auction sites or other platforms, we empower collectors to interact directly with the member dealers for enquiries and purchases by clicking on the e-mail adress.

In order to guarantee the quality of pieces available in the catalogues, objects are systematically validated by all our select members, who are the in-house experts.. Collectors are therefore encouraged to decide and buy with complete confidence. In addition to this, the Asian Art Society proposes a seven-day full money back return policy should the buyer not feel totally satisfied with a purchase.

Items are presented by categories, please check the table of contents. Feel free to ask the price if the artwork is listed with a price on request.

01

HEAD OF A KHMER DEITY

Angkor period, Pre Rup style,
 Khmer Empire
 Cambodia
 10th century
 Greywacke
 Height : 17,5 cm, Width : 10 cm
 Provenance:
 Larry & Sherry Phillips collection, Los Angeles (since the 1970's)
 Michael Phillips, Los Angeles (since 2000)
 Private French collection
 Price on request

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Alexis Renard
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This head is a very fine example of the statuary of the Angkor period, and in particular, the Pre Rup style. It depicts a male deity wearing a detailed headdress with floral motifs, tied delicately at the back and surrounding a high *jatamukuta* (crown of hair). The hairline, the contours of the eyes, the beard and the delicate moustache are all finely engraved.

A large head of Vishnu, dating to between 900 and 925 (in the Bakheng style) is held at the Guimet Museum in Paris (Inv. n. MG18102). A head of Shiva of similar dimensions is held at the Brooklyn Museum (Inv. n. 83.182.5). It dates to the first quarter of the 10th century.

A head of similar size is held at the Metropolitan Museum in New York (Inv. n. 1983.551) and it has comparable facial features. It is dated to between 920 and 925, during the Angkor period. Another large head of Vishnu, in the Koh Ker or Pre Rup style (first half of the 10th century), is held at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (Inv. n. 26.13). For a depiction of a standing Vishnu in the Pre Rup style, 66 cm high and dated circa 945 to 950, see: Lerner, M., exhibition and sales catalogue, *Ancient Khmer Sculpture*, New York: Chinese Porcelain Company, 12 October to 12 November 1994, p. 28, fig. 9. A depiction of Varuna in the Pre Rup style, dated to the third quarter of the 10th century, is held at the National Museum in Phnom Penh (Inv. KA 1579). It has been published in: Jessup, H. I. and Zephir, T. (eds), exhibition catalogue, *Angkor and Ten Centuries of Khmer Art*, Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, 31 January to 26 May 1997, Paris: RMN, p. 219, n. 47. Pieces from the 10th century are often hard to date precisely. However, with this piece, the use of greywacke, the very beautiful surface polish and the refined style allow it to be attributed to the transitional Pre Rup period, corresponding to the reign of Rajendravarman (944–68), and the high point of Khmer statuary.

Publications:

- Stephen Little, 'Images of Buddha from the Michael Phillips Collection', *Arts of Asia*, January–February 2013, p. 109, fig. 17 (the caption incorrectly attributes the head to the Koh Ker period, and also states an incorrect size – 45.7 cm instead of 16 cm).







02

AN AMETHYST AND GOLD RING

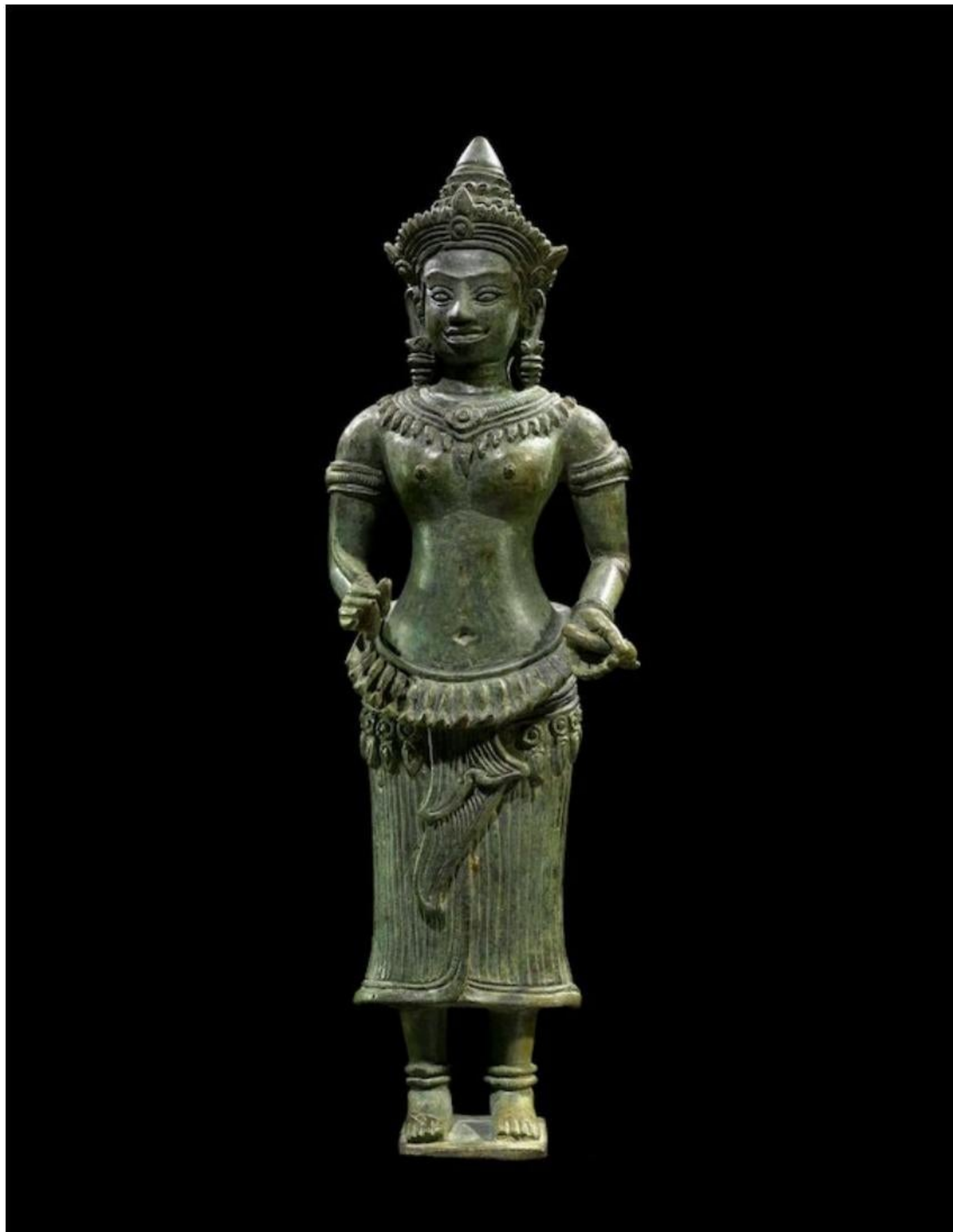
Khmer
14th century
Size: US9
Weight: 23,1 grams
Price: 8.000 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Sue Ollemans
M.: + 44 (0) 7775 566 356
E.: sue@ollemans.com
W: www.ollemans.com

A lovely gold ring with large bezel inset with a heaped cabochon amethyst held in place with four claws and by a high collar and granulated band.





03

**A STANDING FIGURE
OF UMA**

Khmer
12–13th Century
Bronze
Height: 26 cm
Price: 34.000 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Sue Ollemans
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The goddess Uma, also known as Parvati, daughter of the mountains, was the consort of Shiva. When she finally attracted Shiva, after a long and physically gruelling courtship, she shared with her the secrets of the world, a conversation that would lead to the dispersal of this elite knowledge amongst the wise. Shiva's exploits were represented on the relief carvings of Angkor Vat, the centre of the Khmer dynasty and the largest religious monument in the world. Thus, Uma was a favoured goddess of Khmer artists for her important stature in the Hindu hierarchy. This extraordinary bronze sculpture depicts the goddess standing straight, holding a rolled up scroll in her left hand and the stem of a fragmented plant in her right. She is adorned by an elaborate floral diadem and necklace of pedal-shaped pendants. The intricate carving of her conical coiffure imitates the form of a lotus bulb. Her ears droop down to her shoulders from the weight of her ear ornaments. She wears two bands high up on her arms, both decorated with rosettes in the centre, and two heavy anklets just above her feet. Her voluptuous torso is exposed while a long, pleated sarong covers her lower body, supported by a belt decorated by suspended leaf-shaped pendants and two central rosettes. A slight over-fold wraps around her waist and a central sash falls in two layers between her legs, tapering off in a curving fishtail shape. The sensuous form of the goddess recalls a timeless beauty. Her sumptuous jewellery further attests to this elegance.



04

**SORA LANGI
WOMAN'S TUBE
SKIRT (OPENED)**

Toraja
Sulawesi
Second half 19th century
Cotton; warp ikat
72 x 56 in / 183 x 145 cm
Price: 15.000 USD

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Thomas Murray
M.: +1 415.378.0716
E.: thomas@tmurrayarts.com
W: www.tmurrayarts.com

Sora langi is the name of a rectangular cloth that could be stitched up on the vertical seam and worn as a tube skirt, however many were kept as flat textiles and used ceremonially. These are relatively rare and comparatively early, with this most likely dating to the mid 19th Century. It is thought that they were woven in Galumpang to the taste of the ethnic groups living to the north in the Bada, Napu and other valleys. The colors are deep and the fine line progressions offer a very fine aesthetic.







05

PENDENT

Sawu, Lesser Sunda Islands, Indonesia
19th century or earlier
Dongsonian influence
Bronze and copper
Diam.: 7,5 cm
Price: 3.500 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Pascassio Manfredi
M.: + 33 (0) 642195423
E.: pascassiomanfredi@orange.fr
W.: www.pascassio-manfredi.com

Related sample : Musée du Quai Branly, Paris, inventory number : 70.2009.45.1, collected at the same time of our piece.



06

**SEKOMANDI,
CEREMONIAL CLOTH**

Galumpang Toraja,
Sulawesi

19th or early 20th century

Cotton; warp ikat

92 x 53 in / 234 x 135 cm

Provenance:

Ex Laurence Moss Collection

Price: 15.000 USD

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Thomas Murray

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Sekomandi are large four panel cloths with a central body (*bada*) geometric pattern and extended borders known as feet (*kaki*) and were displayed at grand funerary events. The Carl Schuster interpretation that the pattern represents interlocking ancestors as a genealogical continuum seems reasonable in light of their ritual, however field informants have never confirmed this theory. Tragically few original cloths survived a mid 20th Century civil war in the region, which explains their great rarity, though revivals started being made beginning in the late 1970s. From the collection of the famous anthropologist, Dr. Laurence Moss.

Exhibited: Fabric Traditions of Indonesia, Museum of Art, Washington State University, Pullman, WA, Nov.-Dec. 1984; The Bellevue Art Museum, Bellevue, WA, USA, March-May, 1985.









07

DRAWING

Rudolf Bonnet (1895–1978)

Signed and dated : R.B, BALI '49

Red chalk

24,5 x 20,5 cm (frame 44 x 33,5 cm),

Price: 2.500 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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Following the steps of such artists as W.O.J. Nieuwenkamp and Walter Spies, arrived in Bali in 1929 and settled in Ubud, the artists' center then of the island. Inspired by the Italian Renaissance, his main focus was the portraiture, with the aim of depicting the culture of Bali and its inhabitants.

08

**PORI SITUTU',
CEREMONIAL CLOTH**

Toraja People
North Luwu Regency, Rongkong,
Sulawesi
19th or early 20th century
Cotton; warp ikat
96 x 58 in / 244 x 147 cm
Price: 15.000 USD

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Thomas Murray
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W: www.tmurrayarts.com

Often displayed at funerals of great chiefs, the pattern on a Porisitutu is composed of hooked arm elements called *sekong*. Some scholars feel the *sekong* is a non-verbal geometric motif immediately understood within its cultural context but not decipherable outside of it. An alternative viewpoint is that it is less about 'reading' the pattern element by element...better to see and understand it holistically: it is a work of art that bridges East and West.









09

IMPERIAL WOMAN'S ROBE

Vietnam

Nguyen dynasty (1802 – 1883)

Second half 19th century

Brocade weave

Silk and gold threads with a gilded button

Height: 104 cm (41 inches)

Width (sleeve end to sleeve end):
215 cm. (85 inches)

Price:

SOLD

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Alan Kennedy

M.: +1 646 753-4938

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W: www.alankennedyasianart.com

The principal motif on the robe is the phoenix, the most important female imperial symbol. There are a total of ten phoenix medallions on the body and sleeves of the robe, and many smaller motifs including waves, clouds, mountains, bats, fish, lion-dogs, fish-dragons, and traditional sets of auspicious symbols such as the canopy, peach, 'Buddha-hand' citron, peach, pomegranate, peony, lotus, coin, fan, vase, among others.

The imperial robes of Vietnam were modeled after Chinese imperial robes of the Ming dynasty (1389-1644). As such, they have very long voluminous sleeves, and the body of such robes are quite large. This particular robe may have originally have been intended for a Grand Princess, either a sister or aunt to the Queen.

Some later alterations were made to the robe. The side flaps on either side of the body of the robe were added later, and the lining is not original.







10

BELL

Vietnam

Dong Son culture

3rd century BC – 1st century AD

Bronze

Height: 7 cm or 2 7/8 in

Provenance:

Private collection, Belgium

Price: 4.000 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Christophe Hioco

M.: +33 (0) 1 53 30 09 65

E.: info@galeriehioco.com

W: www.galeriehioco.com

Admirably preserved and belonging to the Dong Son culture, this bell combines a strong archaeological interest with a stylistic interest. It is remarkable for three other reasons:

- Its perfectly spherical shape and delicately embellished with a suspension ring that is decorated with a rope pattern. This pattern also adorns the rim of the instrument's slot.
- Its subtlety and precision of execution that display the great mastery of lost-wax technique: to be convinced, one just has to see how regularly the spiral pattern, specific to the Dongsonian decorative vocabulary, is rendered.
- Its particularly bright turquoise blue patina. X-ray analysis confirmed its good condition. Both texture and density are consistent with no trace of breaks or restoration.



11

HEAD OF THE VIRGIN MARY

Hispano-Philippines
17th-18th century
Ivory
Height: 17 cm, 6 ¾ inches
Width: 10 cm, 4 inches
Price on request

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Joost van den Bergh
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E.: joost@joostvandenbergh.com
W: www.joostvandenbergh.com

A solid, carved ivory head of the Virgin Mary. Her eyes made of glass with the ears pierced. Some traces of pigment visible on her mouth and eyelids. The top of her skull has a wooden addition where a wig would have been placed originally..

This exceptionally large and distinct solid ivory head would have formed part of a full statue of the Virgin Mary. Only the head, and usually the hands, would have been made of ivory. The body was made of wood and formed a frame onto which a velvet dress would be attached; often a polychrome base would support this. A small wig made of hair would have adorned the head. Sometimes a crown and jewellery would be placed on the figure. In 1543 the Philippines became part of The Spanish Empire as a colony, which lasted over 300 years. The Spanish introduced Christianity to their colonies and artefacts for worship where commissioned locally. Ivory carving was one of the techniques introduced to the Philippines in order to produce carvings of various Christian iconographies. Ivory figures produced in the Philippines not only catered to local use, but were also produced to export to Latin America and Europe. The close connection between coastal cities and Manila also suggests a transmission of style from the Philippines to China, where carvers adopted the medium of ivory to carve iconographical similar forms of Guanyin for the domestic market. The Hispano-Philippine style encapsulates early interactions between Europe and Southeast Asia. A comparable example is in the Ashmolean Museum Oxford¹

¹ Harle, J. and Topsfield, A. Indian Art in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, 1987, p. 90-91, no. 102







12

A GOLD AND TURQUOISE BELT

China

Tang Dynasty

7th Century

Length: 63 cm

Width: 5 cm

Price on request

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Sue Ollemans

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W: www.ollemans.com

Belt ornaments appeared in bronze or gold from around the 9th Century B. The majority of belt ornaments come from male tombs although a few have been found in female tombs re-enforcing the warrior-like nature of the nomadic women. With increased exposure to the northern nomads the Chinese began to develop their own design of the belt and belt hook. By the Tang Dynasty lavish belt decorations were given as marks of respect with Imperial edicts decreeing and regulating the number of plaques that could be worn according to rank and status. Jade was worn by the Emperor and down to third –ranked officers. Gold silver, bronze and iron inset with hard stones were regulated to the lower ranks. By the Ming Dynasty many of these belts had lost a functional use and had become only a symbol of rank.







13

A SEATED GUANYIN

China

Ming Dynasty

16|17th century

Ivory

Height: 3 1/4 in (8,3 cm)

Provenance:

Private European collection

Price: 9.000 USD

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Rasti Chinese Art

M.: + 852 2415 1888

E.: galler@rastichineseart.com

W: www.rastichineseart.com

An ivory model of seated Guanyin, wearing long flowing robes and cowl, the hands held in front holding a pearl through the robes, the ivory of rich caramel tones

For a similar small seated model of Guanyin, see Spink & Son Ltd., *Ivories of China and the East*, no. 14b; and for another of a seated Guanyin and child, see Spink & Son Ltd., *The Minor Arts of China IV*, p. 38, no. 41.

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14

A MODEL OF BUDAI

China

Ming Dynasty

16|17th century

Ivory

Height: 2 3/4 in (7 cm)

Price: 12.000 USD

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Rasti Chinese Art

M.: + 852 2415 1888

E.: gallery@rastichineseart.com

W: www.rastichineseart.com

An ivory model of Budai, seated with his large head turned slightly to one side, resting his right hand on the knee and his left hand holding a large sack to the side, with smiling expression, pendulous earlobes and well-defined cranium, the ivory of rich chocolate-brown with lighter tones

For a similar ivory model of Budai, see Spink & Son's Galleries, *A Selection of Oriental Works of Art*, p. 46, no. 362; another, see Kao (ed.), *Chinese Ivories from the Kwan Collection*, pp. 170-171, no. 63; for a carving of Budai, see Kerr, Allen and Shih, *Chinese Ivory Carvings: The Sir Victor Sassoon Collection*, p. 209, fig. 189/1560; and another with rich brown patina see Spink & Son Ltd., *Ivories of China and the East*, no. 58

UK CITES export no. 522830/14 and Hong Kong permits





15

A LIBATION CUP

China
 Tang to Yuan dynasty
 9th-13th century
 Jade
 Length: 3 1/16 in (9 cm)
 Price: 18.000 USD

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Rasti Chinese Art
 M.: + 852 2415 1888
 E.: gallery@rastichineseart.com
 W: www.rastichineseart.com

A pale celadon jade libation cup of oval form resembling a skull cap, the interior well hollowed, the exterior rounded, the rim and lip with four brown infilled patches and the stone with russet flecks.

The infilled areas of this cup indicate that this was originally pierced with holes so as to be tied and slung from a belt for use. The simplicity of the object is reminiscent of earlier Tang dynasty bowls and cups, often lobed in form.

For a Tang dynasty white jade oval bowl with incised decoration, see Yang (ed.), *Zhongguo Meishu Feilei Quanjì: Zhongguo Yuqi Quanjì*, Vol. 5: Sui, Tang–Ming, p. 20, no. 30, again appearing in the Palace Museum (ed.), *Classics of the Forbidden City; Jade in the Collection of the Palace Museum*, p. 76, plate 58; and a green jade kapala bowl in the Palace Museum (ed.), *Compendium of Collections in the Palace Museum: Jade*, Vol. 10, Qing Dynasty, p. 290, plate 237; also a Song dynasty white jade lobed cup in Rawson, *Chinese Jade from the Neolithic to the Qing*, p. 391, no. 29:1.





16

FLAYED HUMAN SKIN AS LINGA

Tibet

19th–20th century

Distemper on cloth

height: 118 cm (16 $\frac{3}{8}$ in)

width: 75 cm (29 in)

Price: 4.500 GBP

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Joost van den Bergh

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In this cloth painting – which would have been draped on the ground during exorcism rituals such as the cham dance – the human skin represents linga as the personification of Evil. At the climax of the dance, the skin was pierced by a sword, or phurbu, hence the hole in the centre.

17

LAMA

Tibet
18th century
Gilded bronze
Height: 15 cm or 6 in
Provenance:
European private collection
Price: 20.000 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Christophe Hioco
M.: +33 (0) 1 53 30 09 65
E.: info@galeriehioco.com
W: www.galeriehioco.com

This statuette represents a "lama", i.e. a monk who ranks at the top of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Wearing the yellow and pointed headdress prescribed by the missionary Atiśa (circa 982-1054), he is a master of the dGe-lugs-pa school. With the right hand, he sketches the gesture of teaching and holds in his left hand a book of which he is the author. These two gestures are those of many illustrious religious persons: the first Dalai Lama, the second and the fourth all have such an iconography. Another honorary characteristic: the lama rests here on a mat covering two superimposed cushions.

Stylistically, the bronze is remarkably crafted: The face is idealized, with relatively youthful lines and downcast eyes filled with interiority. The heavy cloak, with its particularly broad and vibrant folds, falls back "naturally", as it would be on a Chinese sculpture.

We can suppose that such a statuette, delicate and powerful at the same time, was part of a series of pontiffs placed in the niches arranged in the woodwork of a chapel.





18

PAIR OF TWO-PANEL FOLDING SCREENS WITH PINES

Mochizuki Gyokkei (1874-1938):

Japan

Meiji period

Circa 1905-10

Ink on gold leaf/paper

Each H. 175 x W. 188 cm

Inv. No. 20.011

Price: 55.000 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Galerie Kommos

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Pine trees are among the most popular symbols for longevity and dignity in East Asian cultures. Their strong, gnarly trunk stands for a long, vital life that resists even the worst circumstances of its surrounding. The rough trunks and the branches, thickly covered with needles and pinecones, are visualizing a common Japanese saying: "A thousand years is the pine tree green" (*Shōju sennen no midori*).

However, in his composition on two separated screens, the Japanese artist Mochizuki Gyokkei combines old pines with very young ones. These two opposing qualities of the trees can be understood as iconographical symbols for "continuity" and "renewal"—expressing the most important sentiments of the Japanese society throughout the turbulent transformation of the Meiji era. By linking these two apparently antagonistic aspects through the formal qualities of his arrangement, though, Mochizuki gives room for further interpretations: The young pines on the left screen are slightly growing to the right, while the monumental trunks of the old pines are obviously bending to the left. In his composition on two physically separated but interrelated screens, Mochizuki is treating the pines, old and young, as two aspects of the same thing, as if the artist want to express his deep understanding that continuity is not possible without renewal and renewal not without continuity.

Mochizuki Gyokkei has succeeded his father Mochizuki Gyokusen (1834-1913), an official painter for the imperial household. From him, Gyokkei inherited his accurate brushwork through a strict training in the family style tracing back to his great-grandfather Mochizuki Gyokusen (1692–1755), who established the family studio combining elements of Chinese painting of the Kishi school with influences by Shen Nanping and Japanese paintings by the Maruyama-Shijō school as well as western painting techniques.





19

LARGE HANGING SCROLL

Plover on the sea shore
by Takagi Yasunosuke (1891-1941)
Entitled: *Nagisa* (Sea Shore)
Signed: Yasunosuke
Japan
1936
ink and colour on paper
Scroll: H. 272cm x W. 237cm
Painting: H. 216cm x W. 196cm
Provenance:
Meguro Gajōen, Tokyo
Price: 12.000 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Gregg Baker Asian Art
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W: www.japanesescreens.com

An unusually large paper kakemono (hanging scroll) painted in ink and colour with chidori (plover) on the sea shore

Exhibited and published:

Bunten, Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, 1936

Meiji, Taishō, Shōwa Nihonga hizō meisaku-ten, Meguro Gajōen korekushon (Meiji, Taishō, Shōwa Masterpieces from Meguro Gajōen Collection), Kyoto City Museum, 1983, no. 51

Shōwa shoki no nihonga meihin-ten, Bijin to kachō, Meguro Gajōen korekushon (Meguro Gajōen Collection, Masterpieces from Early Showa Period – Beauties, Flowers and Birds), Sogo Art Museum, 1988

Takagi Yasunosuke was born in Tokyo. In 1901 he began his studies under Kawabata Gyokushō (1842-1913) at his school, the Kawabata Gagakkō (Kawabata Art School). Later he graduated from the Tokyo Bijutsu Gakko (now Tokyo University of Arts) having studied under Matsuoka Eikyu (1881-1938) together with his colleague Yoshimura Tadao (1898-1952).

He participated in *Shinkō-yamato-kai* as well as *Ki-noka-sha* and researched *Yamato-e* (Japanese style painting). He entered the first Teiten exhibition (1918) with 'Morning Highland' as well as sequential entries to the Teiten in 1929 and 1930. And he was permitted to exhibit at the Teiten without connoisseurship in 1931 and was invited to the Bunten exhibition. He admired Tawaraya Sōtatsu and Ogata Kōrin, and expressed his originality by bringing the Rimpa School's decorative aspect into Yamato-e. Yet never too garish but calm and graceful style can be found here. His extensive research on the movement of tide is crystallised in this painting.





20

NADESHIKO (PINKS)

A six-fold screen

Japan

Edo/Meiji period

19th century

Ink, colour and gold leaf on paper

H. 176cm x W. 377cm

Price : 30.000 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Gregg Baker Asian Art

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Nadeshiko (fringed pinks) are often shown in Japanese painting. The delicate beauty of the flowers belies the hardiness and strength of the plant. This has given it a long tradition in literature, and a place as the symbol of the ideal woman – a combination of strength and grace.









21

DARUMA

Itten Tohai (a Soto Zen abbot from Hokkaido)

Japan

Taishō-Shōwa period

20th Century

Wooden box

Price: 3.300 euros

Little is known about Itten Tokai other than that he was a Soto Zen priest who lived in distant Hokkaido. His Daruma paintings are wonderfully expressive, however, some of the finest examples of the 20th century. As is often the case with Soto Zen artists, who tended to live quietly in remote areas--beginning with Fugai and Ryokan, and down to the present-- there is almost no biographical information available on the artists but the Zenga they produced are frequently outstanding.

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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22

HŌJU

Scroll

by Sakai Shise dojin

Japan

Taishō or early Shōwa period

Circa 1920-30s

Ink on paper, silk mounting

193 x 69 cm (127 x 55 cm)

Price: 4.800 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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至誠天地一家春

Sincerely, spring covered the whole world

The theme is taken from a Chinese poem by Yang Ju-yuan, active the end of 8th to the mid-9th century in the Tang dynasty. The poem blessing the arrival of spring, 山九門曙 天地一家春: *The sunrise arrived on the misty mountain to the city, spring covered the whole world.*

The jewel depicted here is called Cintamani in Sanskrit, *hōju* in Japanese Buddhism. It symbolizes the Buddha preach, also it is considered to be the jewel grants the wish.

We don't have any details about the calligrapher, however the brush strokes are filled with energy for welcoming the spring.



23

BAMBOO

A flower vessel
Japan
Edo period
17th century
Bronze
H. 18.5cm
Price: 2.800 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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W: www.japanesescreens.com







24

TEABURI (HAND WARMER)

Japan
Edo period
17th-18th century
Wood and lacquer
Price: 3.000 euros

Awasebako (collector's box)

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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W: www.mingei.gallery

25

HANAKAGO

by Tanabe Chikuunsai II (1910 - 2000)

Japan

Lacquered bamboo

47 (h) x 26 x 22 cm

Tomobako (Box signed by the artist)

Price: 9.000 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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W: www.mingei.gallery





26

SUMMER TEA BOWL

Japan

Kenzan style

Edo-period

first half of the 19th century

Eyes in metal and ebony

Height : 8,5 cm Width : 14 cm

Price: 2.400 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Kitsune Gallery

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The kanzobako (collector's storage box) describes it as "Kenzan hira chawan" (summer tea bowl) and is signed (unidentified name + kao). The chawan clearly dates back to the Edo-period, probably from the first half of the 19th century, with a typical kodai (foot) as seen on Kenzan school ceramics. The chawan has some calligraphy on the front and reproduces the signature of Kenzan.

A fantastic piece of revival ware after Ogata Kenzan (1663-1743). Ogata is celebrated as Japan's most inventive creator of ceramics. His style influenced many other Kyoto potters. Also his signature became a widely used brand. The so-called "Kenzan school" starts with Ogata Ihachi (grandson of Nonomura Ninsei). Kenzan established Ihachi in a new workshop in the Shogoin temple, just before he moved to Edo. Ihachi was active until 1760. Prior to the advent of urban archaeology in the 1980's, virtually nothing was known about developments in the Kyoto ceramic industry during the second half of the 18th century. Also in Edo we see a Kenzan development (referred to as the Edo school of Kenzan) by the end of the 18th century. The Kenzan revival period (1800 – 1850) gave a boost to the Kyoto ceramic industry: a series of new individual leaders emerged, among them Nin'ami Dohachi, Ogata Shuhei, Kiyomizu Rokubei and Seifu Yohei, reproducing Kenzan wares with and without their own shop marks. A self-designated Kyoto Kenzan "successor" named Miyata Gosuke appeared as well. However, we cannot attribute this wonderful chawan to a particular artist.







27

STORAGE JAR

Tanba Storage Jar for "Japanese pepper"
(*sanshō tsubo*)

Japan

Edo Period

Early 17th century

Ash-glazed stoneware

Height: 27,8 cm x Diam.: 21 cm

Inv. No. 18.017

Price: 15.000 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Galerie Kommos

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Extremely rare early Edo-period storage jar from Sasayama in today's Hyōgo prefecture. With its sharp-angled shoulders, its broad, flat base and slightly narrowed body, this jar illustrates a Japanese type of storage jars that was invented by Tanba potters for the promotion and export for one of the local famous goods, known as *asakurasanshō*, or "Japanese pepper". *Asakurasanshō* (*Zanthoxylum piperitum* var. *inerme*) is a local variation of common Japanese pepper, that is closely related to Chinese Szechuan pepper. However, *asakura sanshō* only grew wild in the mountains of the Hyōgo prefecture and gained popularity throughout Japan for its fresh and bright aroma since the late 16th century.

Keeping the dried spice fresh in order to preserve its delicate aroma was not an easy task within the humid climate of the Japanese archipelago. That explains the distinct shape of this type of jars. They have very thick walls to protect the stored goods from humidity and the narrowed shape makes it easier to lift the heavy jars securely with both hands. Another type of this jar can be found in the Shigaraki pottery for *senbei*, or rice crackers, which was eventually created under influence of the popular Tanba jars.

This fine example of the early 17th century was made of bright red clay on which a natural ash glaze was applied. The clay from Tanba is darker and has less impurities of quartz in comparison to Shigaraki. The ash glaze is of dark green color and shows strong encrustation on the lower part of the vessel's wall. This effect can also be found on the rim of the mouth and is a result of the ash that circulated through the kiln's chamber during the firing. On later *sanshō tsubos* – mostly completely glazed ones – the name of the spice was impressed with a wooden stamp on the wet clay. However, this is not the case here, which can be interpreted as an evidence for the very early production date of this *sanshō jar*.

Tanba jars were favored for their strong natural impression, and some of the irregularities that first occurred accidentally in the process of making these wares, were soon forced by the potters to meet the aesthetic expectations of their customers. Like in this example, we see two deformations on the front of the vessel's wall which were created by the potter to give the piece a more natural looking, "accidental" expression.





28

TEA CEREMONY KETTLE (KAMA)

Japan
by Onishi Jourin
(date of birth unknown – 1727)
Kyoho-period (1716-1735)
Total height : 25,5 cm
Price:

SOLD

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Kitsune Gallery
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A rather unusual kettle having the shape of an eggplant (*nasu kama*) made by the second generation of Onishi kettle makers and ancestor of the Edo Onishi branch. The kettle dates back to the Kyoho-period (1716-1735). Onishi Jourin (son of Jyosei), commonly known as Gorozaemon Nobusada, was a kettle maker to the shogunate. It is said that he made unusually shaped kettles. According to Furuta Oribe he left Kyoto during Kanei-period (1624-44) with his father to settle in Tokyo (Edo). Besides working for the shogunate, the family also made kettles for great tea masters such as Oribe, Enshu and Ishishu. Other than kettle making, he made 7 bronze lanterns placed in front of the Mausoleum of the 6th Shogun (Tokugawa Ienori) in 1712 as well as some mother-in-law bells in 1719. The Edo Onishi family continued for several generations. This kettle comes with a storage box of which the lid has a *hakogaki* (inscription) by the 13th generation Onishi kettle maker known as "Onishi Jyocho". The lid describes the shape as well as the diameter measurements of the kettle and lid opening (*kantsuki fu ma wataru nasu kama* (eared magic diameter eggplant kettle), *dou wataru nana sunbu* (diameter of the body 22,5 cm), *koukei san sun roku bu* (diameter of the mouth 11 cm) *tsuki kimen* (demon face handles). Furthermore Jyocho certifies this kettle to be from okama master Gorozaemon and dating back to Kyoho period. Signed Onishi Jyocho with seal, dated March 1880. The front lid is entitled "eggplant kettle".

Chagama (tea kettle) are cast iron kettles used in Japanese tea ceremony to heat the water used to make tea.





蘇子奎

一銅徑七寸二分

一口廣三寸六分

一銀附鬼面

右金章保年時代五刻在案

作無跡也

清金師

大西澤長

庚辰仲春日





29

VASE

Japan
Meiji-Taishō period,
Circa 1900-1926
Bronze
74 (h) x 12 x 12 cm
Price: 4.700 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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30

BRAZIER

Japan

Meiji/Taisho period

Early 20th century

Bronze

H. 25cm x Diam. 33cm

Price: 3.200 euros

A bronze brazier of globular form with a flaring mouth, decorated with a mottled patina and a simple band

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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31

COUNTERWEIGHT

Counterweight for a Traditional Kettle
Hook in Shape of a Sea Bream,
Japan

Edo period

19th century

Carved Japanese zelkova wood,
metal applications

H. 25,6 x L. 41,3 x D. 14 cm

Inv. No. 19.002

Price: 14.000 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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Beautifully carved cross-piece (*yokogi*) for a traditional Japanese kettle hook. Such items were used for a special construction, called *jizaikagi*, for hanging a kettle over open fireplaces (*iroori*) in traditional Japanese houses. The counterbalance had the function to adjust the position of the hook over the fire and was usually carved in shape of a fish - may it either a koi carp or, like in this case, a sea bream with its typical high body and sharpened fins.

The sea bream or red snapper (*tai*) is an expensive and popular fish in Japanese cuisine. Its name is pronounced the same as the last syllable of the word *medetai*, which means "happy", "propitious" or "auspicious." For that reason, the sea bream became one of the lucky symbols in Japan.

Usually made by carpenters, the *yokogi* shown here is of unusual fine quality and made with great artistic skills. The shape of the bream is naturally resembled by a master sculptor, who also spend much attention to carve out the distinct fins of the animal. The fish is made of a single block of heavy zelkova wood, which is known for its good resistance to the extreme changes of temperature and humidity over open fireplaces. Nevertheless, the surface shows traces of its extreme environment in form of a fine net of cracks that cross the whole object without any effect of weakening it. It is an extraordinary impression of a patina, that only occurs within ages of usage. This piece's natural beauty embodies the concept of Japanese aesthetic, that crystallizes within the notion of *sabi*. Originally part of the word pair *wabi-sabi*, *sabi* describes the attraction of objects that only came through age and natural use.







32

A HONKOZANE NIMAI DO GUSOKU (ARMOUR) WITH KOBOSHI KABUTO

signed Nagamichi
Japan.

Early 18th century

Price: 40.000 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Kitsune Gallery

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Nagamichi, active during the late 17th and early 18th century, is said to be related to the Myochin school, although very little is known about his life and place of residence. His works show a superior forging quality and workmanship. He is illustrated in the supplement to the Meiko Zukan and his style, easily recognisable (impeccable craftsmanship) is in fact not typical of any school. He is considered to be among the greatest hoshi-bachi craftsman. Here we have a 62-plate *koshozan-bachi* helmet or *koboshi kabuto* with a 5 tier blue braid *kozane shikoro* (neck guard) of which the last tier has white and orange mimi ito (design repeated on the *kusazuri* (skirt)). The large *fukigaeshi* (turnbacks) with a *sasa kamon* (bamboo leaves family crest) and the *mabisashi* (peak) are decorated with stenciled leather. The *oni maedate* (little demon forecrest) is of later date. A superb Nara style red lacquered *ressei* (fierce expression) *menpo* (face protection) with bristle moustache and gilded teeth fits well with the interior red lacquered *shikoro*. The *menpo* has a 4-lame *yodaregake* (throat guard) in blue laced *kozane*. The whole armour is "en suite" with perfectly matching *kozane* and lacing design consisting of dark blue / light blue / white and pink-orange *odoshi*. Also the *fukurin* (border) ornating the *mabisashi*, the *fukigaeshi*, the *do* (cuirass or body part) and the *sode* (shoulder guards) is matching on all these. The *sasa kamon* (bamboo family crest), ornating the *fukigaeshi*, is repeated 3 times on the upper part (stenciled leather) of the *do* and twice on both *sode*. The *sangu* consisting of hyotan style *kote* (armoured sleeves), *haidate* (thigh armour) and *suneate* (shin armour), all have matching *kagomegata gusari* chainmail. For the more mobile parts of the sleeves, *futae gusari* chainmail has been used. All gilded parts are matching in colour (one exception has to be noted for the *yodaregake*, which has been replaced at some time, but still, completely in line with all other parts) Note that the brown leather found on the *suneate* is also repeated into the attachment liner of the *kusazuri* (skirt attached to the *do*).

As such we have an entirely "en suite" (matching of all parts) *honkozane* (made from individual scales) *nimai do* (two-part cuirass) *gusoku* armour dating back to the early 18th century and made to fit with this amazing *koboshi* helmet by Nagamichi, one of the most desired Edo-period kabuto masters.

The armour is enclosed in a wooden box (of later date)





33

QAJAR HELMET

Qajar Empire (Modern-Day Iran)
19th century
Overall Height: 660 mm (26 inches)
Diameter: 200 mm (7 ¾ inches)
Price: 9.500 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Runjeet Singh
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Etched over the steel dome of this captivating helmet (or *kulah khud*) are flourishing flowerheads which simultaneously fill gold-lined panels designed to mimic the feathers of a peacock whose neck and head form a striking centrepiece. Overlaid lines of gold convey the tufted texture of the bird's face, and pins with gilt finials have been inserted at the top of the head to represent the "crest". Moreover, in forging the helmet's bowl with a gently arched ridge, the armourer has cleverly created a mimetic contrast against the frontal section of the helmet, which has been etched with further flowers in bloom and at the centre depicts the calming face of the "Lion-and-Sun" symbol (or *Širo Xoršid*) popularly used in Qajar work, and which would go on to become the national emblem of Iran,[1] the sun-rays here overlaid with lines in gold.

Complete with twin plume holders - which originally may have held the blue-and-green feathers of peacocks in keeping with the helmet's structural theme - a nasal bar, and multi-tailed, the helmet is a persuasive testament to the creativity often exhibited in the Persian metalware of this period.

A *kulah khud* (Inventory Number B.O. 5038)[2] with near-identical decorative schema is preserved within the collection of the Hermitage museum in Saint Petersburg, Russia, though the condition of our example is slightly superior (the Hermitage's helmet lacks one of the three slots inserted at the top of the head, and the upper half of the peacock's beak is bent).

[1] See <https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-islam/chronological-periods-islamic/islamic-art-late-period/a/divination-bowl>

[2] <https://bit.ly/3qo9tRU>







34

STEEL KARD

Qajar Empire (Modern-Day Iran)
18th century
Overall Length (out of scabbard):
405 mm (16 inches)
Price: 9.500 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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[1] See Runjeet Singh, *Iconic: New York 2018*, pp.18-21, Cat. Nos. 4 (http://runjeetsingh.com/inventory/176/kard_dagger) & 5 (http://runjeetsingh.com/inventory/177/pierced_kard).

[2] <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/24308>

[3] <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O71512/knife-unknown/>

Forged entirely from steel, this *kard* dagger originates from the Qajar Empire (modern-day Iran).

A trio of calligraphic panels are etched over the hilt, the bolster and backstrap then overlaid with a series of miniature panels which alternate between foliate emblems and further calligraphic inscriptions in gold. Further panels at the base of the blade are chiselled with an enchanting array of unfurling flowerheads and intermingled vines which frame an arabesque calligraphic panel in gold.

The superb artistry of the dagger's decorative elements is matched by a 'wootz' steel blade in pristine condition which on close inspections shows a rich patterning, the blade tapering elegantly to a slender point. The dagger retains its black-painted shagreen scabbard with maroon-coloured cord for suspension.

The dagger's inscriptions are translated below:

On the hilt, Side A:

"In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. When the help of God and the victory arrive, And thou seest men entering the religion of God by troops."

On the hilt, Side B:

"Then utter the praise of thy Lord, implore His pardon; for He loveth to turn in mercy." (Quran 110) Ha. And He is a faithful companion(?). O Imam Zayn al-'Abidin!"

Panel at the base of the blade (both sides translated together):

"The intention of the design is that something of us should endure,

For I see no permanence in existence. Year 1197 (1782-3)" (from *Gulistan*, a famous Persian poem by Sa'di)

Spine of the blade and backstrap:

"O God! O Affectionate! O Beneficent! O Requirer!"

Underside of the tang:

"O God! O Muhammad! O 'Ali!"

Bolster:

"O Possessor of Majesty and Generosity!"

Daggers made in this style - with chiselled decoration in arabesque panels and foliate motifs - were exhibited by Runjeet Singh Ltd in *Iconic: New York 2018* (see Cat. Nos. 4 & 5).[1] Further comparanda can be found in important museum collections. See a dagger (Accession No. 36.25.1043a, b) preserved at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York thought to have been made in the workshop of Muhammad Nami,[2] and another (Accession No. 824-1893) at the Victoria & Albert Museum with similar chiselled decoration to our own.[3]







35

MONUMENTAL CALLIGRAPHIC COMPOSITION

Turkey
Ottoman Empire
1276 AH / 1859 AD
Pigments and gold on paper
Height : 57 cm, Width : 149 cm
Provenance:
Private French collection
Price: 25.000 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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This monumental calligraphic composition, organized around a delicate cursive calligraphic mirrored composition, bears on each side two large geometrical kufic square panels. In the lower central part, a panel in *naskh* calligraphy is inscribed on seven lines within gold borders.

The central calligraphy reads "Glory to God".

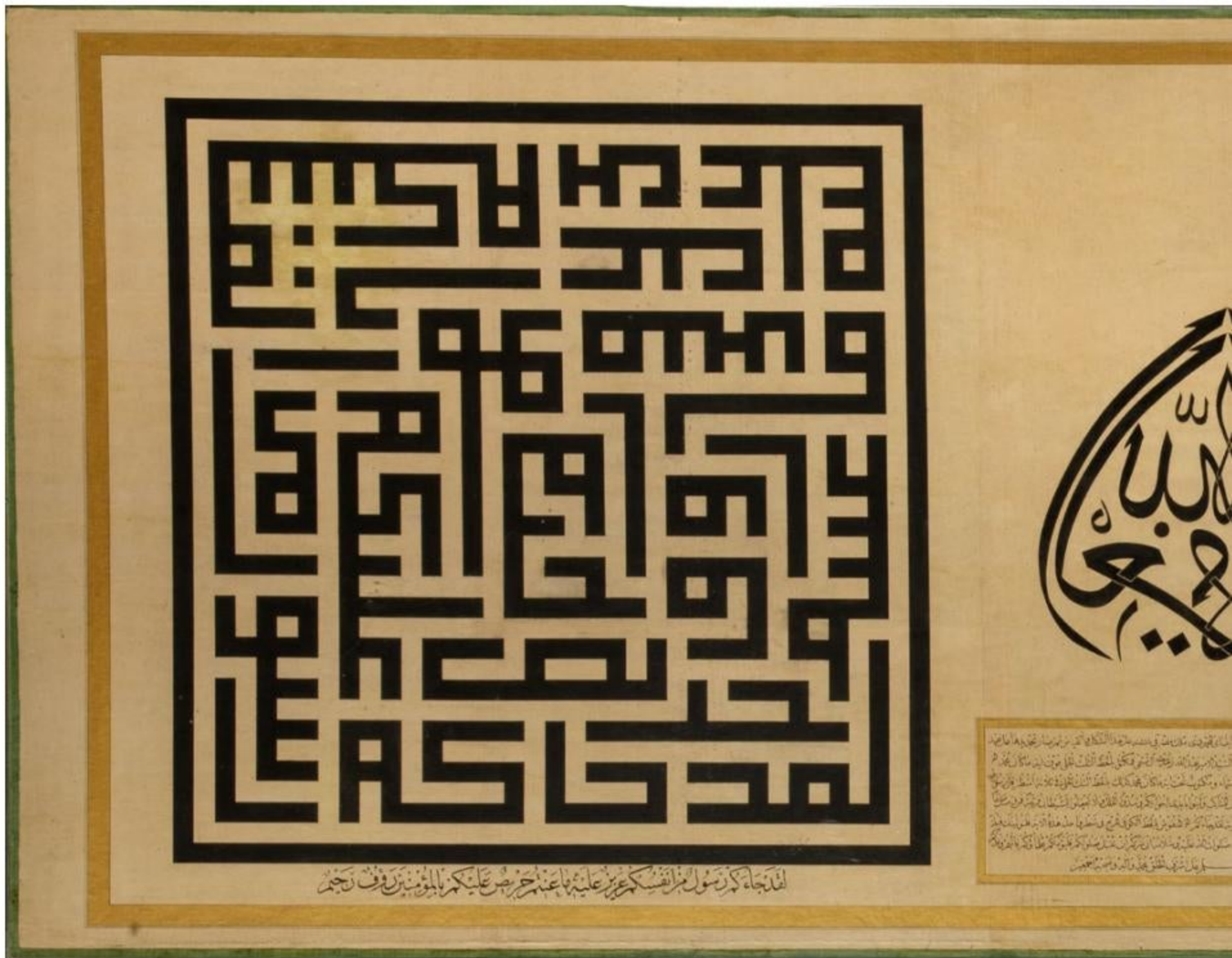
On the right, the square kufic composition is inscribed with the verse from Qur'an 33:40, also inscribed in elegant cursive calligraphy underneath, allowing an easier reading. On the left side, the second square kufic composition is inscribed with verse 9:128 from Qur'an, also inscribed in elegant cursive calligraphy underneath.

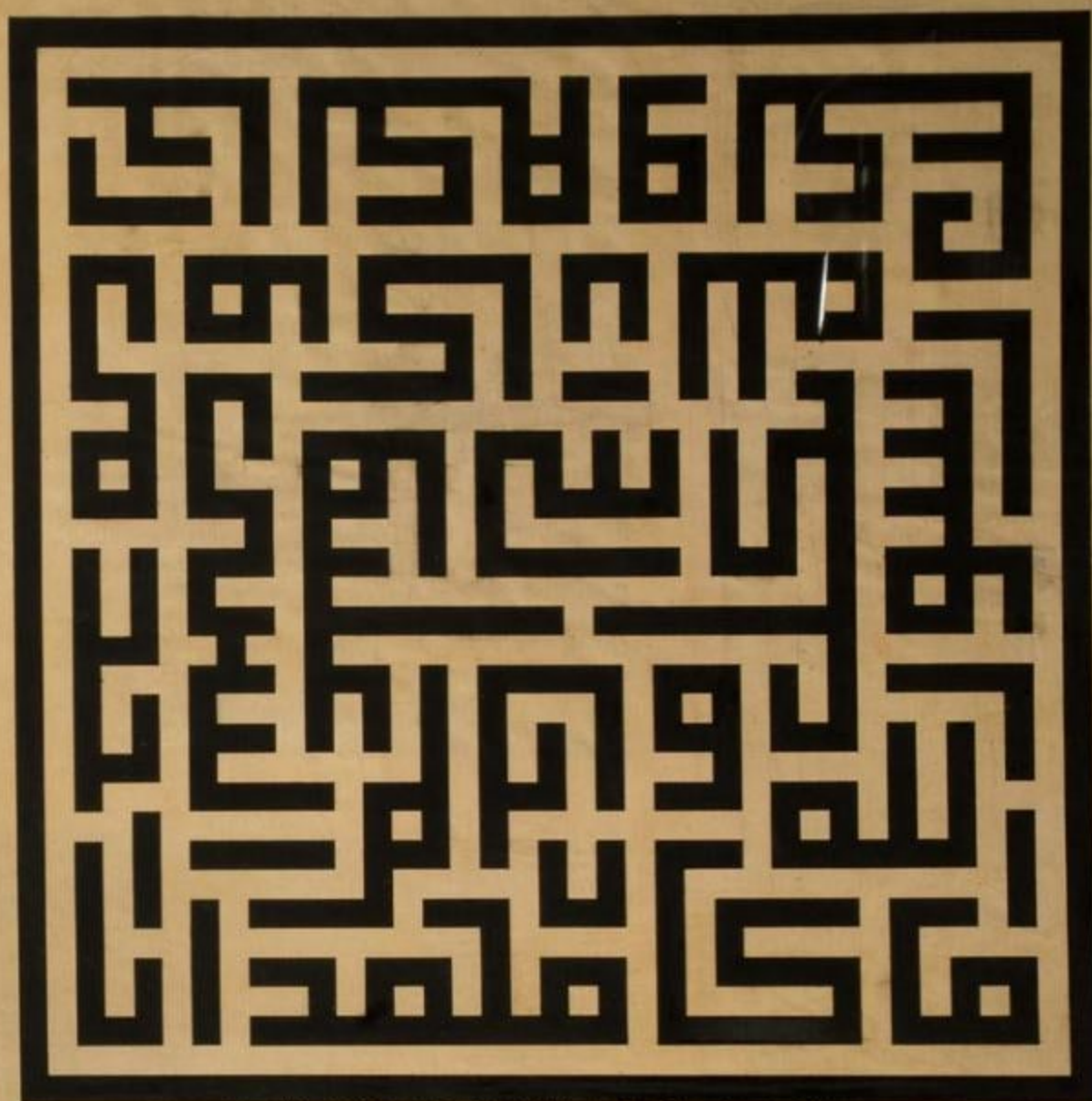
In the central part, the text written in *naskh* within gold borders reads: "These three calligraphies were painted for the Uthman Mihrab in the Prophet's Mosque, under the reign of al-Ashraf Q'itbay al-Mahmud in year 888. A copy was then made, resembling in form and composition, by order of Sultan Abdülmecid, son of Sultan Mahmud, in the year 1276. Their composition was conducted by the hand of the eminent 'Abd Allah Zamzam."

The text also describes other elements from the original calligraphy, interspersed with references to Sunnah.



هذه القطعات الثلاثة نقشت على الحجر بالعمارة العثمانية في زمن الملك الأشرف قايتباي المماليكي ملك مصر في سنة ٨٥٠ هـ على هذا الشكل القياس ثم صار تحديدها على عهد
سلطنة الخوفاة السلطان عبد المجيد خان السلطان محمد خان ملية وأولى رعاها سيده السيد الأمير عبد الله زعيم القسطنطينية بالخط الثلث للجلي فوق آية ما كان محمد لم
النفوس بالخط الكوفي في مربع في سطر واحد هذه الآية قد نرى قلب وجهك في السماء و مكتوب تحت آية ما كان محمد كذلك بالخط الثلث للجلي في ثلاثة أسطر قال رسول الله
صلى الله تعالى عليه وسلم أقيموا صغركم فأنما تصفون صغوف الملك كذا وحادوا بين كفاك وأيقوا بأيدي أنواركم وسدوا الخلق لا تجعلوا للشيطان فرجة فوق صغركم
وصلى الله ومن قطع صغركم قطع الله عمر وجهك و مكتوب أيضا بالخط الثلث للجلي فوق آية لقد جاءكم في سطر واحد هذه الآية فلو أنك قبلت
فرضها ومنعت لقد جاءكم أيضا بالخط الثلث للجلي في ثلاثة أسطر قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم إن قبل صلواتكم فليكن لكم علة في كبر فأنتم في كبر
فما بينكم وبين ربكم في رواية فليكن لكم حبان كبر الله صديقكم ————— لم على أشرف الطلق محمد وآله وصحبه أجمعين



[illegible]

ما كان محمد ابا احد من جالكفر لكن هو الله وخاتم النبيين كان الله بكل شيء عليم

36

OTTOMAN DAGGER
HANDLE

Turkey
 Ottoman Empire
 mid-16th century
 Jade inlaid with gold, turquoise
 Height : 7,8 cm
 Provenance:
 Private French collection
 Auction sale, 2012 (Rieunier &
 Associates)
 Private Swiss collection
 Price: 35.000 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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This delicate dagger handle is made from pale jade, the soft green of the stone blending perfectly with the delicate inlaid gold arabesques and dots that almost completely cover its surface. The top of the handle is decorated with finely chiselled flowers.

A weapon with a very similar handle, also inlaid with gold and of typical Ottoman shape, is held in the collections of the British Museum in London. Its design is closely related to this piece, but the flowers on the upper part are inlaid with stones.

The tradition of Ottoman jade was strongly influenced by the Persian tradition of the Timurid and early Safavid dynasties. Numerous military confrontations (including the famous battle of Chaldiran in 1514) allowed the Turks, through the seizure of Persian objects and craftsmen, to provide the Ottoman court with models. The presence of Persian craftsmen, mostly from Tabriz, is notably demonstrated by salary registers from the Topkapi Palace dating from 1526 (Allan, J., 2004, *Hunt for Paradise: Court Arts of Safavid Iran 1501–1576*, Milan: Skira Editore, pp. 213–14). The handle shown here has a shape and decoration that, although indicating Persian influence, are probably of Ottoman origin.

Very similar examples of jade objects from the Ottoman court workshops with arabesque and dots decorations are held in various museum collections. A jade box cover formerly in the collection of Louis XIV (Inv. n. MR 194), as well as a bowl (Inv. n°MR202), are held at the Louvre Museum. A jade binding inlaid with gold and stones is held in the collections of the Topkapi Museum in Istanbul (Inv. n. 2/2095). All of these pieces date from the 16th century. The Topkapi binding and the Louvre bowl are published in the exhibition catalogue *Topkapi à Versailles: Trésors de la Cour Ottomane*, Musée National des Châteaux de Versailles et de Trianon, 4 May to 15 August 1999, RMN/AFAA, p. 281, n. 241 (binding), and p. 284, n. 245 (bowl).





37

THREE GOBLETS

Kalash people of Chitral,

Northwest Pakistan

18th century or earlier

Silver

Provenance:

Private collection in France

Price on request

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

Jonathan Hope

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Their design is inspired by the drinking vessels sometimes seen on Gandharan friezes, carried by followers of Dionysius, and are a distant echo of the Hellenistic culture brought to the region by Alexander the Great's army





38

ILLUSTRATION TO A RASIKAPRIYA SERIES: RADHA SEATED WITH A CONFIDANT IN A PAVILION

Kangra

Attributed to Purkhu

Circa 1820

Opaque watercolor heightened
with gold on paper

Image: 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 7 in. (27.6 x 17.7 cm.)

Folio: 13 x 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (33 x 23.5 cm.)

Provenance:

Royal Mandi collection.

Private English collection

Price: 60.000 USD

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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Seated upon a lush carpet of scrolling florals, Radha listens attentively to her sakhi, one hand resting on a vibrant orange cushion as the other is raised to her chin. Outside, blooming creepers peek out among the foliage where two love birds sit apart among the branches, just as the separated lovers Radha and Krishna. The *yonis*- and *lingam*-shaped vessels behind Radha, as well as the tall pointed minaret, are symbolic of desire and longing. A line of black Braj Bhasa above refers to Krishna's manifested state of heavy separation and Radha's state of distress caused by quarrels with Krishna. The folio number '196' is inscribed in the upper left corner, the reverse with '911.'

The verso is inscribed with a verse from the Rasikapriya in alternating red and black script:

Sakhi to nayika: *"If you have a complaint against your dear one, you should speak of it only in private to him; it would be wrong to disclose his guilts publicly. If his eyes stray in undesirable directions, you may try to restrain them, but not to prick them with a knife. Remember, he is the same Syama, separation from whom can kindle such a fire in the hearts of women that a solution of camphor will have to be sprayed to cool it. You should speak as propriety demands, and not speak harshly to one who has abandoned everything for the sake of your love."*

(translation from M.S. Randhawa, *Kangra Paintings on Love*, New Delhi, 1962, p.90)



39

AURANGZEB IN COURT

Pahari, probably Bilaspur

Mid-18th century

Opaque watercolor heightened with gold
on paper

8 ½ x 11 ¾ in. (21.6 x 29.8 cm.)

Price: 80.000 USD

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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A nimbate Mughal ruler, likely a stylized image of Emperor Aurangzeb, is shown seated on a silver throne, leaning against a golden floral bolster as he gives audience to a delegation of six gray-bearded Muslim ministers who stand before him respectfully, perhaps seeking appointments as governors or envoys. The scene evokes cold overtones, as it is most likely winter-time in the Punjab Hills. The figures can be discerned as Muslims by their long winter jamas which are tied to the right (unlike Hindus who tie to the left), the style of their boots and the manner of their neatly trimmed beards. The emperor is seated on the terrace of an outdoor pavilion, beneath a golden parasol, handling a strand of prayer beads while an attendant stands behind him waving a flowing chowrie.

Several features of this work are indicators of a Bilaspur origin: the overall color palette with its flattened darkish green-blue landscape accentuated by short parallel strokes of dark green ground; the patterned lines of trees and small bushes throughout the landscape; and the prominent striped rug beneath the feet of the subjects. Moreover, the painting is composed in a pothi (horizontal) format.

The work is uninscribed so one cannot be sure of the figures' identities. However, their faces, defined with individualizing features and distinctive beards, are painted with Mughal naturalism, leaving open the possibility of future identification. The characters serve as representations of real individuals rather than idealized types.







40

**ARCHITECTURAL
FRAGMENT**

Central India or Rājasthān

11th or 12th century

Sandstone

Height: 64 cm or 25 ¼ in

Provenance:

Spink & Son, London, 1996.

Art Loss Register Certificate,
ref. S00109292.

Price: 25.000 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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This fragment of a lintel and the top of this jamb are both characteristic of the architecture of India in the medieval period (9th – 12th century). At that time, sanctuaries were covered with sculptures that blended divinities with a stereotypical architectural decor.

As the central part of the lintel, generally bearing the face of the divinity to which the temple is dedicated, is missing, it's hard to make any pertinent comments about this large relief. Likewise, the attributes of such characters are hard to make out. So, any identification is pure conjecture. Nevertheless, the young woman at the top of the abutment might be the great goddess of Hinduism. The lovers next to her are not the usual mithuna frequently found on the facades of temples. The man's hair is pulled back in the heavy bun worn by ascetics and refers to a śaiva context with attested Tantric sexual practices. More hypothetical are the other characters, including the series of virile men with their topknots, paired off in front of a gallery with slender columns, partially conserved. This detail is very unusual. It is also very difficult to identify the two small characters on the top register. The one sheltered in the shrine on the right is surrounded by children. The other, more centered, holds some sort of attribute. Similar shrines probably ran the length of the register, perhaps five in all. The absence of the three other characters makes it impossible to clearly identify the group they would have formed, maybe some of śaiva tradition.

Architectural elements make up a good part of the composition's structure. Smooth parts, such as the pilasters, contrast with more highly decorated parts: extremely stylized flat floral banners, and multiple small Indian arches. Such oval openings are found very early in Indian architecture. A large Indian arch let air and light in at the top of the facades of caves excavated as of the 2nd century B.C.E. Their terminology remains problematic, even if some authors call them "kudu", "holes" or "window gavakā", "cow-ear-shaped window". After a long evolution, during which they multiplied, they end up covering with a fine fishnet pattern the facades of the towers (śikhara) that rise over the cella chambers of Hindu temples. Grouped on certain central bands during the Gupta era (4th – 6th century), they eventually covered the entire upper sections as of the 8th century, evidently first in Rājasthān and then throughout northern India by the time of the Gurjara-Pratihāra Dynasty (6th – 11th century).





41

A NAVARATNA PENDANT

South India
19th century
Length: 2, 8 cm
Price: 1.800 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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A small oval navaratna pendant with fine repousse work to the reverse.

Navartana (Nine Holy Stones) represents the planets revolving in harmony around the sun. It is believed that if the *navaratna* is worn it will bring the body into harmony in alliance with the universe. Set in a prescribed arrangement that will protect the wearer from negative energies bringing good health, wealth, mental strength and wisdom.

Ruby – Sun
Pearl – Moon
Blue Sapphire – Saturn
Yellow sapphire – Jupiter
Hessonite – Ascending node
Emerald – Mercury
Coral – Mars
Cat's eye – Descending node
Diamond – Venus





42

**FIGURE OF BALA
KRISHNA**

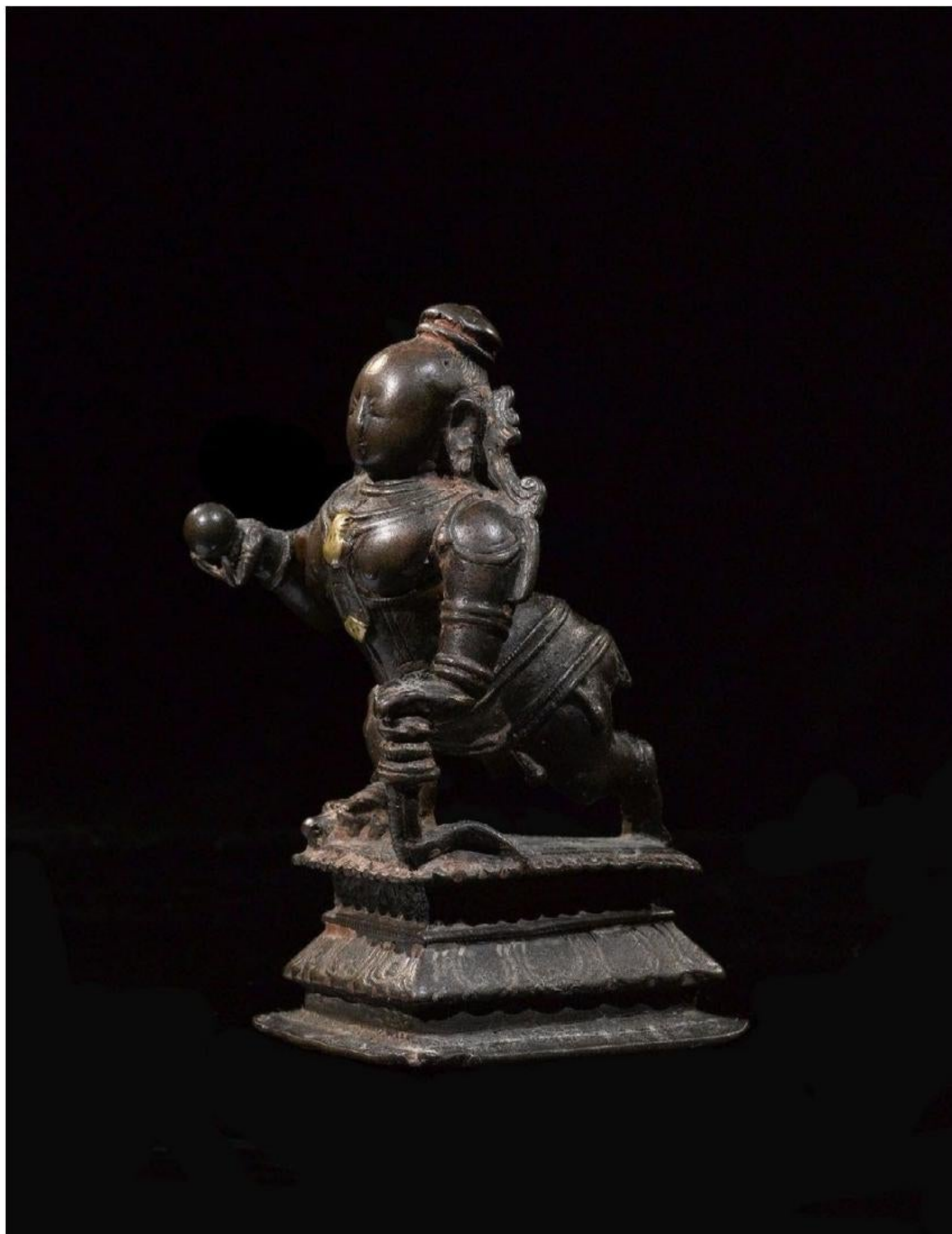
Vijayanagar Karnataka
India
16th century
Bronze
Height: 9 cm
Price: 3.200 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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Krishna is a Hindu deity often regarded as the eighth avatar of Vishnu. According to ancient epics, such as the Mahabharata, he was born of royal parents, the princess Devaki and her husband Vasudeva. Devaki's brother had previously seized the throne unlawfully and deposed their father. A prophecy warned him that one of Devaki's children would seek revenge for this unlawful act so he tried to obliterate them. Krishna escaped and was brought up by foster parents, Yasoda and Nanda in Gokul. Nanda was the head of a community of cow-herders hence Krishna's association with cows, butter and milkmaids. He became known as 'Govinda' (finder of cows or 'Gopala' (protector of cows) and is often depicted leaning against a standing cow.

In this lively piece Krishna holds a round butter-ball in his right hand. As a child he was notorious for stealing butter from his neighbours. Despite his mother's protests he frequently escaped punishment. The left arm is extended to balance his body and rests on a serpent. The body is delightfully rotund with rounded belly, breasts and buttocks. As was customary, Krishna is depicted naked except for the jewelled ornaments that are draped elegantly over the body. And highlighted in gold. Although the dance of the butter thief (navanita-nritta-murti) is not an uncommon subject, it is certainly rarer than depictions of Krishna playing the flute.



43

RAO BISHAN SINGH WATCHING AN ELEPHANT FIGHT

Bundi

Circa 1804-1821

Opaque watercolor heightened with
gold on paper

14 ½ x 12 ¾ in. (36.8 x 32.4 cm.)

Provenance:

Private European collection.

Price: 60.000 USD

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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From an observation tower in the upper right portion of the illustration, Rao Raja Bishan Singh watches a pair of elephants in combat. A hectic scene unfolds below him as the mahout seated atop one of the attacking elephants struggles to control the crazed animal. Handlers holding spears and forked blades scatter for their lives as the elephants clash together, their bells and streamers flying. The dynamic composition, accentuated by the diagonal lines of the architecture and tumbling elephants, creates a sense of drama as the violent battle ensues.

During his travels to India, the French physician François Bernier (1620-1688), gave an account of elephant combat that speaks to the intensity captured in the present painting:

"A wall of earth is raised three or four feet wide and five or six [feet] high. The two ponderous beasts meet one another face to face on the opposite sides of the wall... The riders animate the elephants either by soothing words, or by chiding them as cowards, and urge them on with their heels, until the poor creatures approach the wall and are brought to the attack. The shock is tremendous and it appears surprising that they should even survive the dreadful wounds and blows inflicted with their teeth, their heads, and their trunks. There are frequent pauses during the fight; it is suspended and renewed, and the mud wall being at length thrown down, the stronger more courageous elephant passes on and attacks his opponent and, putting him to flight, pursues and fastens on him with such obstinacy that the animals can be separated only by means of cherkys, or fireworks, which are made to explode between them."



44

BUDDHA SHAKYAMUNI

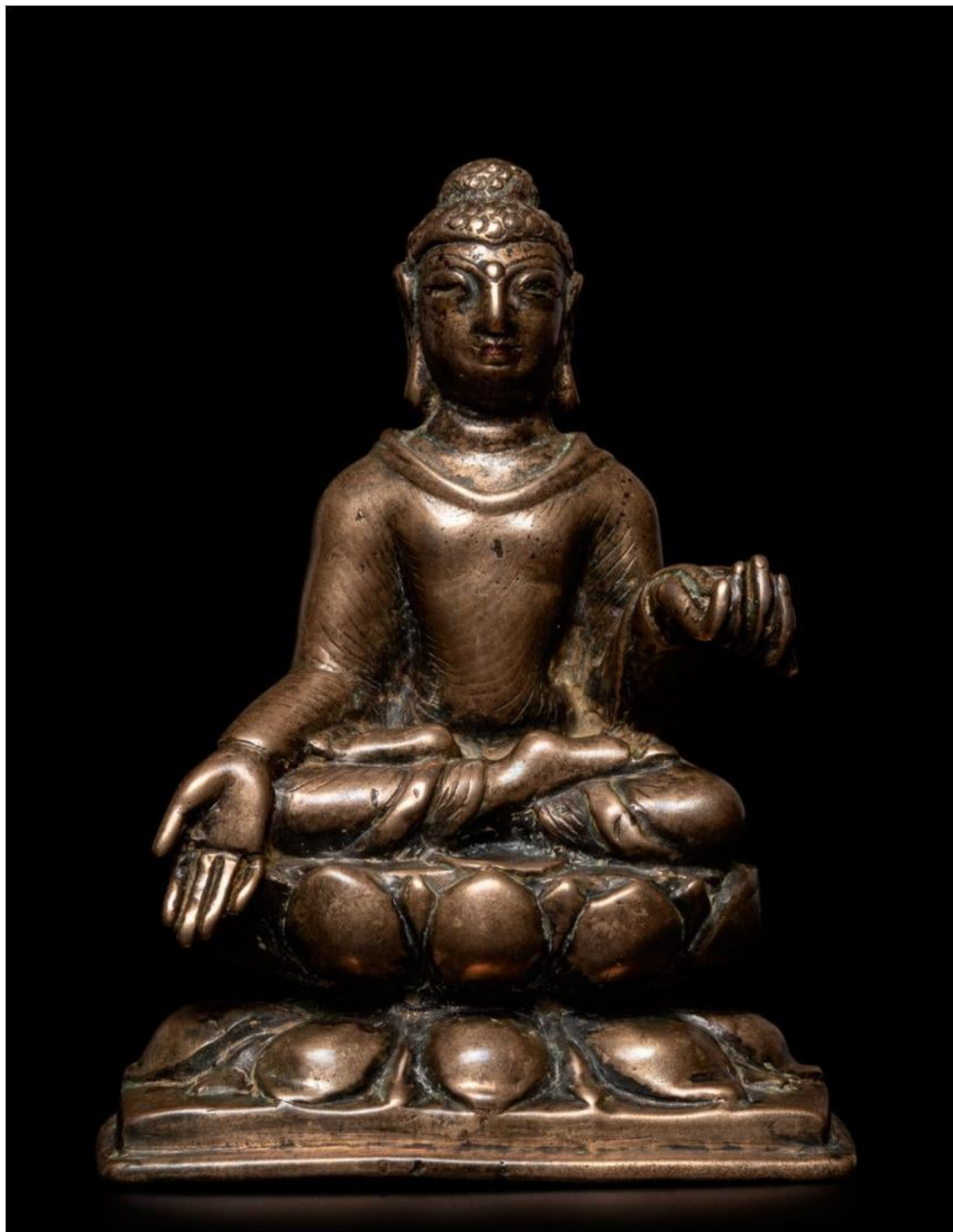
Swat Valley,
7th-8th century
Bronze with copper inlay
Height: 3 ¾ in. (9.5 cm.)
Provenance:
Bruce Miller, San Francisco, 9 June 1976.
The James and Marilyn Alsdorf
Collection, Chicago.
Published:
U. von Schroeder, *Indo-Tibetan Bronzes*,
Hong Kong, 1981, p. 89. Fig 8D.
Price: 60.000 USD

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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Buddha Shakyamuni displays the boon-granting gesture (*varadamudra*) with one hand and holds the end of his robe with the other as he sits cross-legged on a lotus throne. Copper-inlaid lips as well as a small circle of copper at the top of the buddha's cranial protuberance (*ushnisha*) point to the accomplished hand behind this compact figure, as do the lifelike hands which are charmingly large in proportion.

The brassy metal alloy, and manner of modeling the oval face with wide eyes and thin brows that intersect at a circular *urna*, as well as the figure's profile—upon which you can draw a straight line from the forehead to the tip of the nose—is attributable to both the Swat Valley and Kashmir. The present figure, however, was allegedly found in Afghanistan (see U. von Schroeder, *Indo-Tibetan Bronzes*, Hong Kong, 1981, p. 89. Fig 8D). The buddha, however, iconographically matches several preceding examples in *Indo-Tibetan Bronzes* attributed to the Swat Valley, one of which was discovered at Charbagh (see *ibid*, fig. 8B).



45

RADHA WATCHING A STORM

Signed 'Mohammadi'

Mandi

Dated 1824 (Samvat 1854)

Opaque watercolor heightened with gold on paper

Image: 9 1/3 x 6 5/8 in. (24 x 17 cm.)

Folio: 11 7/8 x 9 7/8 in. (30.3 x 25 cm.)

Provenance:

Theo Brown and Paul Woner, San Francisco, 1970s-1982.

Private collection, Los Angeles.

Bonhams New York, 19 Mar 2018, lot 3106.

Price: 60.000 USD

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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Verso inscribed:

S[amvat] 30 re Bha [drapada] pra [vishte] 10 Shri Miyan Sahaba ki nazar kita ch[tere]. Mahamadiye; translated, "Presented to Miyan Saheb (exalted member of the royal family) on the 10th day of the Bhadrapada month of the year 30 (corresponding to 1854) by the painter-Mohammadi".

The painter evokes the atmosphere of the monsoon season with a turbulent sky of billowing rain clouds and lightning bolts. The passionate nayika clad in a richly ornamented dress looks back to her courtesans, gesturing in the hope that the arrival of the rain will hasten the return of her lover. The powerful and brooding presence of the peacock signifies both the arrival of the rainy season and amplifies the absence of the *nayak*.

Mohammadi (Mohammad Bax) was the disciple of Sajnu, whose prominence as a master artist became fully realized under his new patron Raja Ishvari Sen of Mandi after he left the court of Kangra around 1804. The style favored in Mandi in the early decades of the nineteenth century diverted towards curious subjects and a naïve style under Shamsheer Sen. Sajnu and Mohammadi followed the conventions developed in the Guler and Kangra school and focused on the classic *Bharamasa* and *nayika* love poetry, such as that illustrated in the present painting.

This work is important as it shows the high quality of painting produced in the nineteenth century, indicated by a date on the verso which corresponds to 1824 CE. This remains one of the very few folios bearing the artist's signature. However, the name of the patron in the inscription remains absent and is only referred to by the honorific title "Miyan Saheb." It is possible that this inscription refers to Raja Bijai Sen, who ruled Mandi from 1851 to 1902.

Compare the present painting with a similar scene in the San Diego Museum of Art published in Goswamy & Smith, *Domains of Wonder*, San Diego, 2005, pp.252-3, fig.108. Also see a closely related work of similar size dated to circa-1840, entitled, *Palace Women Watching the Approaching Storm*, sold at Christie's New York, 18 September 2013, lot 363.



46

DIPAK RAGA

India, Lucknow or Faizabad
18th century
Polychrome pigments and gold on paper
Page : 38 x 29 cm
Painting : 25 cm x 16,5 cm
Price: 10.500 euros

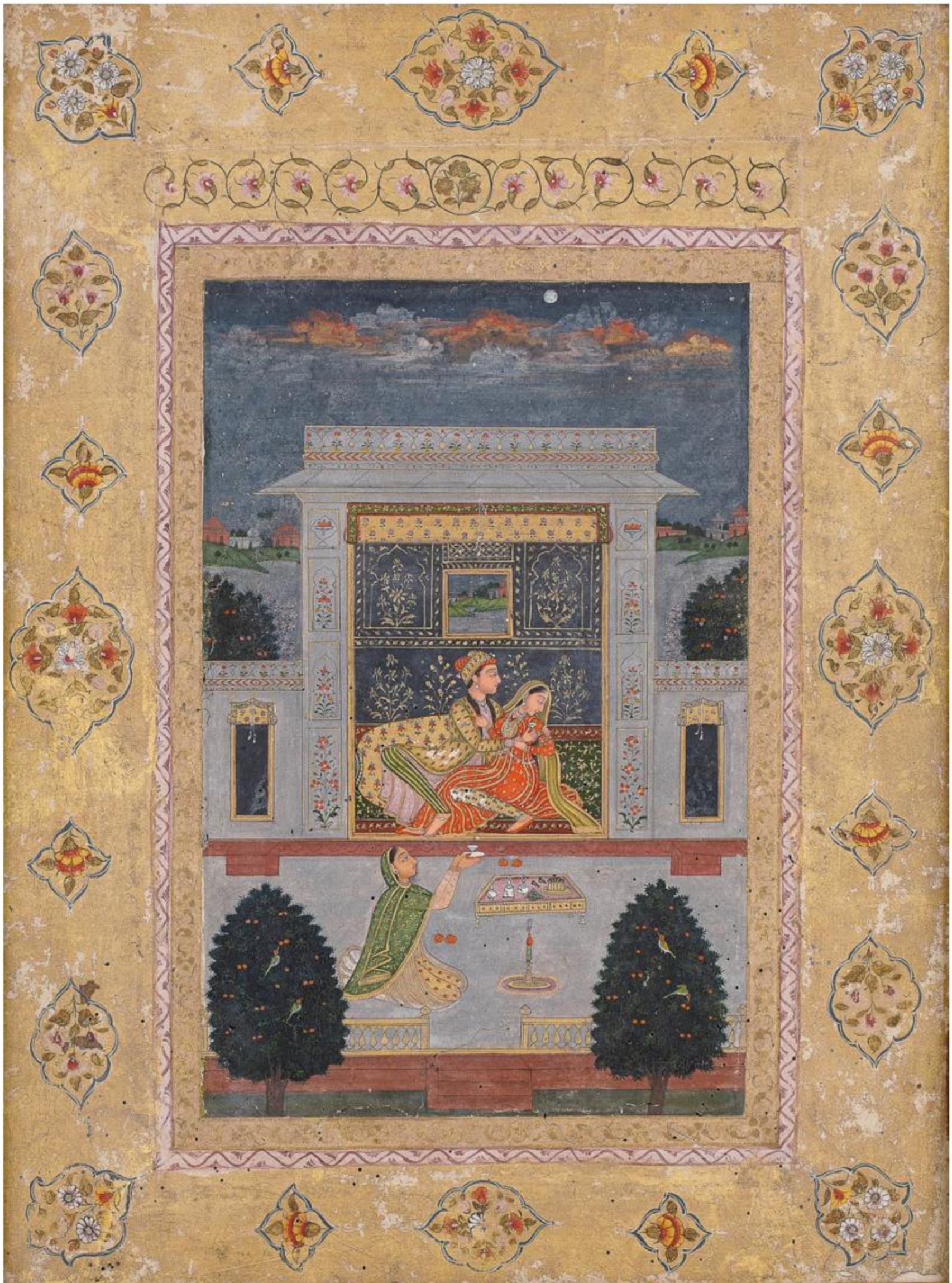
OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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Originally, a *raga* is a medieval Indian musical system intended to induce a specific feeling in the listener. Each melodic composition relates to an emotion, a state of mind or a general mood (love, grief, devotion, awaiting the arrival of a loved one...), sometimes associated with a season or a specific time of day (dawn, dusk, spring...), thus creating an image or a story.

This concept was then adapted to produce paintings known as *ragamalas* (literally 'bouquets of ragas') – a unique combination of painting, emotion, poetry and music. Deeply rooted in the Indian world, the *ragamala* tradition inspired many different versions by artists' workshops from the 16th century, classified into various different types. These 'paintings of feelings', which have no Western equivalent, can be declined in both female (*ragini*) and male (*raga*) versions.

This painting probably illustrates the musical mode 'Dipak' (meaning a lamp or flame). The Dipak mode is the fourth family of *ragas*, corresponding to the passage from spring into early summer. Linked to nocturnal melodies, other examples of Dipak *ragas* represent a couple embracing on a candlelit palace terrace.





47

PORTRAIT OF A MAHARAJA

Rajasthan, Kotah
Early 19th century
Black line drawing with colour
highlights
Height : 31 cm, Width : 20 cm
Provenance:
Private French collection
Price: 4.200 euros

OBJECT PRESENTED BY:

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This beautiful Kotah study, enhanced with touches of colour, depicts a Maharaja on his horse. Dressed in a turban adorned with jewels and wearing a string of pearls, he is armed with a spear, a sword and a bazuband. His horse is also richly attired. An inscription in Devanagari above the character can be translated as follows: Sri Maraja Narsigsigji khamula [?] 31'. It could therefore be the Maharaja Narsinghji of Khamula (probably a *thikana*, or province, of Rajasthan at the time).



